

Child Mental Health, Theory & Field Experience
PY 395
The University of Alabama
Spring 2017
Fridays 8:30am - 11:00 am
Gordon Palmer Hall

Instructor: Sara L. Stromeyer, Ph.D.

Email: slstromeyer@ua.edu

Office Hours: Before/after class

**In-person and by email are the best ways to reach me. I am available as needed for any questions, concerns, or just to chat.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

The course will expose students to issues in child mental health and treatment, with a focus on professional ethics, mentoring, careers in child mental health, and evidence-based treatments for childhood disorders. The course will combine in-class lecture/discussion with experiential learning at Brewer Porch.

Prerequisites: PY 101; Students will complete an application and the course instructor will interview students prior allowing them to register for the course. Consideration will be given to students' academic performance, relevant prior coursework (e.g., PY 352 and PY 358) and experience, and career goals.

Course Credit: 3 hours

*This course does not satisfy any specific requirements for the major, it is an elective.

Readings: There is no required textbook for this course. However, you may want to purchase Careers in Psychology: Opportunities in a changing world (Kuther & Morgan, 4th edition). Selected chapters will be covered and disseminated to you, but you may wish to have your own copy of the full book. The majority of readings for this course will consist of journal articles or chapters from textbooks. These will be disseminated to you by the course instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Child Mental Health! This course is designed for advanced undergraduate psychology majors who are interested in pursuing careers related to child mental health. We will attempt to cover many relevant and interesting topics in the field of child mental health, including but not limited to) ethical practices in working with children, mentoring

relationships, practical issues in mental health settings, careers in mental health, child psychopathology, and evidence-based treatment. This is a unique course designed in partnership with Brewer Porch Children's Center, and will allow students to observe children and mental health care workers within an active mental health setting. Significant out-of-class commitment is required and students should be prepared to write about and openly discuss topics, issues, and opinions related to the course, drawing upon their experiences at BPCC.

Course Objectives:

1. *Describe and apply ethical standards about working with children in mental health settings*
2. *Synthesize literature on mentoring relationships and utilize this information during practicum experiences at Brewer Porch*
3. *Describe careers in mental health settings*
4. *Understand how treatments are evaluated and describe evidence-based practices in the treatment of common childhood disorders*

Brewer Porch Children's Center (BPCC):

Brewer Porch Children's Center, part of the College of Arts & Sciences at UA, provides model treatment programs for special needs children, adolescents, and their families. It offers seven residential and outpatient programs designed for children with specific emotional and behavioral needs. BPCC is located at 2501 Woodland Road, Tuscaloosa, AL. **(205) 348-7236.**

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course will meet once a week for 2 ½ hours for class lecture and discussion. Class meetings will be a combination of lectures on class topics as well as guest lectures from staff at Brewer Porch or other child mental health settings. Students will also spend 2-3 hours a week at Brewer Porch for the experiential learning component of the course.

Reading Assignments. Assigned readings need to be completed prior to the class meeting times. Class time is intended to discuss experiences at Brewer Porch and the topics outlined above. It will be difficult to cover all the topics if students do not read material before coming to class. *Please come to class with at least two questions or topics you want to discuss related to the assigned readings for that week.*

Ethics Quiz. Prior to beginning the practicum at Brewer Porch, students will complete a quiz reviewing ethical guidelines for working with children. This quiz may include information about policies specific to Brewer Porch.

Weekly Journal. Students will create a journal documenting their experiences at Brewer Porch. Students should complete one entry for every week that they are at BPCC. The journal entries should not include any identifying information about the child clients with

whom they come into contact. The entry should briefly discuss the actual activities completed and include a detailed reflection of the student's experience synthesized with information from course readings and discussions. For example, a student might describe an interaction with a child client and then discuss an aspect of treatment or diagnosis that they may have a question about as a result of the interaction.

Capstone Paper. Students will write a 5-7 page paper that focuses on an aspect of their experience at Brewer Porch. In this paper the student will introduce the topic and discuss what they learned about the topic as a result of their experience at Brewer Porch and any lingering questions they may have about the topic. While the paper is not a formal literature review, students should use 3-4 articles from scholarly journals or textbooks to provide background and empirical support for the topic. Sample topics include: specific disorders, methods of treatment, or careers in childhood mental health.

BPCC Experiential Learning. Students will spend two to three hours a week at Brewer Porch. Students will be supervised by an on-site clinician at BPCC, who will communicate with the students about their experiences and keep in touch with the course instructor about the attendance and conduct of the students.

During time at Brewer Porch, students will interact with and observe child clients. Students are neither to "treat" children nor act as a mental health professional. Instead, students are to act as a mentor to the child clients and focus on encouraging them and acting as a positive role model. Students may have opportunities to observe group sessions, talk and play with children, or facilitate other games and activities. Students will always be within easy access to mental health workers and on-site clinicians, who are ultimately responsible for the child clients. Students will need to find their own transportation to and from BPCC and should allow enough travel time. Students will need to have a TB test and background check, as well as complete online skills training, before they begin attending BPCC.

Attendance and Participation: *Attendance is mandatory.* Additionally, students will be graded on their overall class participation. This course is intended to function as primarily a discussion-based course and will be most beneficial and rewarding to the students if everyone participates on a regular basis.

Policy on Missed Coursework: Given the nature of this course, students MUST commit to attend class meetings and complete BPCC hours weekly. If a student misses more than one class without documentation, their grade will drop a letter grade for each subsequent absence. If a student cannot attend their placement during the agreed upon time, they must contact the professor and the contact person at Brewer Porch to make up their hours within the next two weeks. The student may not miss more than one week at BPCC. If, by the last day of class during the semester, they have not completed enough sessions of experiential learning at BPCC, they will receive a failing grade for the course. If the staff at BPCC report any problems with attendance or behavior, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss remediation. If the behavior is not resolved the student may be asked to withdraw from the course or they may receive a failing grade.

Grading Structure:

Final Grades are distributed across assignments as follows:

Ethics Quiz	50 points	~11%
Weekly Journals	100 points	~22%
Capstone Paper	100 points	~22%
Attendance and Participation	200 points	~44%

TOTAL POINTS = 450

The University of Alabama plus/minus grading system will be used to assign letter grades. The grade criteria are:

A+	97% +	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%
A	93-96%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%
		F	59% and below				

GENERAL CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

Electronics: Please keep your cell phone and/or any device that makes noise off or silent during class. Answering a phone call, text messaging, chatting or sending email during class is inappropriate. You are welcome to bring your laptop to class for the purpose of taking notes. If I become aware that you are using the laptop for any other purpose, I'll ask you not to bring it back.

Classroom Civility: I hope to create an environment where open discussion about topics in psychology is encouraged. There will be some discussions of sensitive topics about which individuals will hold differing opinions. Please RESPECT the opinions and perspectives of your classmates. This does not mean that we cannot disagree, but that we create a classroom climate that is relaxed and civil. One of the most valuable aspects of college is exposure to the variety of life experiences and viewpoints. You can gain the most by listening carefully to others and presenting your views respectfully.

Email: I will try to respond to emails as soon as possible. However, before you email a question, make sure the answer is not in the notes, an email, or the syllabus. If the answer is in one of these places, I will simply refer you to these sources. Please do not wait until the night before an assignment, as I may not be able to immediately answer your request. For more extensive or grade-related questions, please ask to meet in-person.

Policy on Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University of Alabama expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. At the beginning of each semester and on examinations and projects, the professor, department, or division may require that each student sign the following Academic Honor Pledge: "I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at The University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary procedure resulting from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will result in penalties as severe as indefinite suspension from the University."

Disability Statement

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary.

If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call (205) 348-4285 (Voice) or (205) 348-3081 (TTY) or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to see me during office hours. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services, 133-B Martha Parham Hall East, before receiving academic adjustments.

Severe Weather Guidelines

The guiding principle at The University of Alabama is to promote the personal safety of our students, faculty and staff during severe weather events. It is impossible to develop policies which anticipate every weather-related emergency. These guidelines are intended to provide additional assistance for responding to severe weather on campus.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate lifesaving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the [National Weather Service](#) and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take.

The Office of University Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
- Weather advisory sent out through UA Alerts to faculty, staff and students
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA-TV/WUOA-TV, and on the website at <http://wvuatv.com/content/weather>. WVUA-TV Home Team Weather provides a free service you can subscribe to which allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail or cell phone. Check <http://wvuatv.com/content/free-email-weather-alerts> for more details and to sign up for weather alerts.

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar; sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change. I will update the schedule as changes occur.

Date	Topic	Readings	Guest Lecturer	Assignments
Jan. 13 th	Orientation *Meet at Brewer Porch	-----	Ross Grimes	-----
Jan. 20 th	Ethics	Ethics Code	-----	-----
Jan. 27 th	Ethics Quiz; Mentoring Relationships	Psychology Today; Rhodes 2011; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002	-----	Journal
Feb. 3 rd	Types of Mental Health Settings and Practical Issues	Comer et al.; SAMSHA Integrated Primary Care (p. 1-22); Williams & Glisson	TBA	Journal
Feb. 10 th	Careers	Kuther & Morgan: Ch. 1 (p. 8-end); Ch. 2, 3, 4	TBA	Journal
Feb. 17 th	Careers Cont'd	Kuther & Morgan: Ch. 5, 7, 11, and 13	TBA	Journal
Feb. 24 th	Child Psychopathology: Internalizing Disorders	Mash & Barkley chapters (Mood Disorders; Anxiety Disorders)	TBA	Journal
Mar. 3 rd	Child Psychopathology: Externalizing Disorders	Mash & Barkley chapters (ADHD; Conduct and Oppositional Defiant Disorders)	TBA	Journal Paper Topic Due
Mar. 10 th	Child Psychopathology: Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Mash & Barkley chapters (Autism Spectrum Disorders; Intellectual and Learning Disabilities)	TBA	Journal
Mar. 17 th	SPRING BREAK!	-----	-----	-----
Mar. 24 th	Child Psychopathology: Other disorders of interest; Trauma	Mash & Barkley chapters (PTSD, Schizophrenia, OCD)	TBA	Journal Paper Outline Due
Mar. 31 st	Child Psychopathology: Other disorders of interest	Mash & Barkley chapters (Eating Disorders, Health & Somatic Disorders)	TBA	Journal

		Roberts & Steele chapter (Sleep)		
Apr. 7 th	Honors Day	-----	-----	-----
Apr. 14 th	Evidence-based treatment and prevention	Mash & Barkley (Cognitive-Behavioral Systems Treatment) Alfano & Beidel (DBD and ASD treatment chapters)	TBA	*2 Journals <i>Optional: 1st draft due, if feedback desired</i>
Apr. 21 st	Treatment of Child Psychopathology	Alfano & Beidel (Anxiety and Depression treatment chapters) Rubin (Trauma-Focused CBT)	TBA	Journal
Apr. 28 th	Last Day of class! Choosing a career Applications	-----	-----	Journal
May 6 th	-----	-----	-----	Capstone Paper Due

Other important dates:

Wed, Jan 11th – First day of class

Wed, Jan 18th - Last Day to Add a Course or Drop a Course Without a Grade of "W"

Wed, March 29th - Last Day to Drop a Course with a Grade of "W"

May 1st – 5th: Final Exam Week

May 9th: Grades Due